CANADIAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BRANCH OF THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE AND DAIRYING

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NOTES ON THE EXPORT APPLE TRADE

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NOTES ON THE EXPORT APPLE TRADE.

(From A. W. Grindley, Chief Inspector at Liverpool for the Canadian Department of Agriculture.)

The apple crop of the United Kingdom for 1904 will only be of fair quantity, and will not affect the demand for the best class of Canadian apples; but there will not be the keen demand for inferior grades which was met last season owing to the total failure of the English crop of apples, together with the scarcity of other fruits.

The outlook is that there will be sufficient English apples to supply the cider makers and leave a surplus to meet the Canadian shipments of early varieties.

In shipping Canadian apples to Great Britain, the following directions should be followed:—

PACKING APPLES.

1. Cool all fruit thoroughly before packing.
2. Handle as little as possible
3. Grade fruit according to "Fruit Marks Act."
4. Pack fruit tightly in package.
5. Pack no inferior fruit for export.
6. Pack a limited quantity of fancy apples of the best varieties in boxes, holding not less than one bushel or forty pounds nett of fruit, a suitable size being the Canadian standard (10 x 11 x 20 inches, inside measurement). Little or no packing material should be used, but a sheet of cardboard at top and bottom of case will reduce the amount of injury from bruises. Only very fancy fruit for dessert use, such as "Fameuse," "King," "Wealthy" or other highly coloured varieties, should be wrapped in paper.
7. The barrel is the most suitable package for the bulk of the apple trade with Great Britain. It is popular with the wholesale trade, and the retailers like it as the net weight of fruit holds out, which is an object where fruit is sold by the pound; the demand for apples in boxes will increase when the trade find they get a good article combined with 40 lbs. net weight of fruit.

Barrels should be well made, strongly nailed and should have eight hoops, two each at top and bottom, with four quarter hoops. Place at each end of barrel a circle of heavy cardboard, in order to prevent the fruit being bruised and becoming unsightly when exposed for sale; these cardboard circles should have semi-circular holes at each side to allow of their being easily removed.

8. Brand packages for export according to "Fruit Marks Act," Section 4.
9. Use only new barrels or boxes for the export trade.
10. For making barrels or boxes use a wood that will not taint the fruit.

SHIPPING APPLES.

1. Ship only very choice fruit of the early varieties, as early apples have to compete with home grown fruit on the British markets.

Table varieties of choice quality, packed in cases, should be shipped in cold storage at a temperature ranging from 35° to 40°. A lower temperature is not required. A great and sudden change of temperature always causes damage to perishable food products, causing apples to become "slack," "wet" and "wasty."

NOTE.—Mr. Grindley has represented the Canadian Department of Agriculture at Liverpool since July 1st, 1898.

Apples in barrels should be shipped in holds which are equipped with forced ventilation, (electric or steam fans).

2. Ship regular supplies at regular periods and not too large quantities at any one time.

3. Do not force apples out of season on the British markets; for example, do not ship winter varieties when there is a demand for early varieties. The British trade do not buy to hold in storage, so hold late varieties of apples until they are seasonable and in demand.

4. Ship as few varieties as possible in the same consignment.

5. Canada ships too many varieties. Export shipments should be confined as nearly as possible to the following varieties:—

1. Baldwin.	3. King.	5. Spy.
2. Greening.	4. Russet.	6. Ben Davis.

The best class of trade buy when and where they can get large quantities of uniform grade and variety leaving the shipments of different varieties and mixed grades to the smaller dealers and costers.

MARKETING APPLES.

The leading fruit markets in Great Britian are London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester, Cardiff and Hull. These ports are the distributing bases for the bulk of the fruit shipments as well as other food products sent to Great Britian from Canada. Canadian shippers, as a general rule, will do well to confine their shipments to one or more of these ports, for the business reason that it is better to have the bulk of your goods at a good distributing base, than at a market which is confined to local demands and which may become glutted and demoralized under heavy supplies.

Individual Canadian shippers may make good business connections with firms at inland British towns, and realize very satisfactory returns for their goods, but as a general rule it is not advisable to exploit new markets unless prepared to meet losses which are liable to be made in establishing new trade connections.

As the bulk of Canadian apples shipped to Great Britian are sold at public auction it may be of interest to Canadians to know how these sales are conducted at Liverpool and Manchester.

PUBLIC FRUIT SALES AT LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER.

Liverpool and Manchester have each a large sales room where an Association of fruit brokers conducts public sales on fixed market days with occasional special sales.

Regular sales days in Liverpool are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Regular sales days in Manchester are Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The sales rooms in Liverpool and Manchester are constructed with seats facing a pit which is below, and in front of, the auctioneer and which has a double elevator for raising and lowering samples from or to basement below. Printed catalogues are furnished to buyers which give a description of the fruit to be sold, and also includes mark and name of shipper, number of barrels etc., in lot, variety or varieties of apples, apparent condition, such as tight, slack, wet, slack and wet, etc.

HOW THE SAMPLES OF LOTS FOR SALE ARE TAKEN.

Sample packages are taken from the dock (wharf) by the brokers, and no sample is admitted into the sales room which has been opened or tampered with in any way. The packages, (barrels or boxes), are not opened until ready to be raised into the sales room, so that even the auctioneers have no idea of the quality of the fruit beyond what

can be told before packages are opened; thus "tights" or "slacks" are told by sounding on end of barrel, "wets" or "slightly wet" are told by outside appearance of package.

Brokers and buyers are allowed to examine a limited number of barrels or boxes of apples at the "docks" when the the cargo is discharged, and before sales take place, but none of the packages so examined are admitted into the sales room as samples.

In both Liverpool and Manchester it is customary to empty the sample packages into large baskets before the buyers, so that there is nothing but a bad reputation to be gained by facing barrels with choice apples.

CONDITIONS OF SALE.

1. All fruit and produce is offered on the condition that the price paid be regarded by the buyers as the value of the sound goods contained in any package, whether the whole of such contents be sound or only a part thereof, and as regards such of the contents as are spoilt, damaged or otherwise defective, so as to be unfit for human consumption, such defective goods are not intended by the brokers, or purchased by the buyers, for the food of man.

2. The highest bidder (in due time) shall be the purchaser, unless the lot shall be withdrawn; and if any dispute arise, the manner of settling such dispute shall be decided by the selling broker.

3. The goods shall be taken away at the purchaser's expense, as soon as possible after sale, and any goods not rejected by purchaser during the day following sale shall be considered as accepted by buyer, according to the re-selection of selling broker's men, and shall afterwards remain on quay or warehouse at the buyer's risk and expense.

4. Payment shall be made by cash before delivery, if required. No discount to be allowed. A deposit of twenty five per cent shall be made (if required by the selling broker) at the time of sale.

5. Each bidding not to be less than ½d. under 3 shillings, 3d. under £1, and 6d. over £1.

6. It shall be at the discretion of selling broker to take or refuse the biddings of persons who have been defaulters.

7. Both seller and buyer shall be bound by the signature of the selling broker to the catalogue, with buyers' names and prices affixed.

8. In the event of non fulfilment of any of these conditions, the deposit shall be forfeited, and the fruit may be re-sold at the seller's discretion, either by public or private sale; and the seller shall be under no obligation to give notice of such second sale, but the loss, if any, shall be borne by the defaulter.

9. Buyers not taking delivery of samples by noon on the day following sale, will incur a charge of 3d. per package per day.

REGULATIONS OF SALES, TURNS OF SELLING, Etc.

1. That sales (called regular sale days) shall commence at a fixed hour and on certain fixed days, as arranged by the brokers, on which days the turns of brokers shall follow the order of the rotation card previously drawn up and agreed upon.

2. That sales on other days (called extra sale days) shall commence as arranged at special meetings of the brokers, and turns shall on such extra sale days follow the order of the regular sale day immediately preceding.

3. That on regular sale days the first turn of each broker shall not exceed forty minutes, second turn 30 minutes, and subsequent turns 15 minutes, but on extra sale days, or when the time for selling on regular sale days is changed to an earlier hour, the first broker shall have one full hour for his first turn, after which the turns shall be the same as on regular sale days; when an extra sale is held on same day in consecutive weeks, extension to one hour for first sale shall not be conceded.

4. That no broker is obliged to commence a sale unless he has at least ten minutes before the dinner hour, and the broker whose turn expires within ten minutes of the dinner hour may continue to sell if broker next on turn does not choose to do so.

5. That no small lots be offered during first three turns unless all large lots are already sold, or that brokers having any large lots unsold agree to the offering of small lots before the three turns have been exhausted.

6. That any lot shall be considered small if consisting of less than 20 packages of any produce except tomatoes and mandarins in packages of 11 lbs. gross or under, which being in lots of less than 40 shall also be considered small.

7. That a lot once passed be not offered again same day; the selling of samples to constitute another lot.

A. W. GRINDLEY.

LIVERPOOL, July 26, 1904.

PROSPECTS FOR CANADIAN APPLES.

(*From* JOHN BROWN, *Inspector at Glasgow for the Canadian Department of Agriculture.*)

From all accounts the apple crop of Great Britian for 1904 will be a good one compared with last year, which as is well known was a total failure. The demand for early varieties of Canadian apples will not be so good or bring such high prices as last season owing to the increased production of the English orchards; and also to the expected larger exports of Dutch apples, &c., from the continent. Under these circumstances Canadian packers will be well advised to send over only their FANCY FRUIT, as apples of inferior quality will not find a ready market. For late varieties the demand should be good provided the quality is right, as here again (like the early varieties), only fruit of good quality will command a good price. This fact cannot be too strongly impressed on Canadian growers, especially in a season like this, when all kinds of home and continental fruit will be plentiful.

SHIPPING.

Early varieties should be shipped in cold storage if possible, at a temperature of from 35 to 40. The fruit should be thoroughly cool before being packed, otherwise good results need not be expected. In the case of apples in ordinary storage, shippers should always try to secure accommodation in parts of the steamer where there is good ventilation by fans. If the fruit is in good condition when shipped and has a free circulation of air during the voyage over, it will almost be sure to land in good order.

PACKAGES.

The barrel still retains its reputation as the favourite and most suitable package for the bulk of apples shipped. Barrels should be strong and tight fitting, and should invariably have eight hoops, the extra fractional cost for the two hoops (which often prevent a barrel being broken) is in itself an excellent insurance. A piece of thick cardboard should be put at top and bottom of each barrel to protect the surface of the fruit. There is a good demand for a limited quantity of boxes, but only apples of really fancy quality should be put up in this package, as second grade fruit will not return a satisfactory price to the shipper. Last season we had large quantities of apples shipped to Glasgow in boxes, the majority of which were not first grade, and it was only those

packers who had carefully selected their fruit and sent only the best quality that received good returns for their consignments. It would be of great advantage if all packers would use a uniform size of box holding not less than 40 lbs. net of fruit. It is a mistake to use a lot of packing material. A sheet of cardboard at the top and bottom of each case is all that is necessary. Last year I noticed that several packers used far too much excelsior packing; what the trade want is a box full of apples, not two thirds apples and one third packing. As regards wrapping, it is not advisable to wrap apples unless the fruit is of an extra fancy quality; soft varieties such as "Fameuse" or "Wealthy" should be wrapped in paper. All packages should be clearly and distinctly marked with the name and address of packer, variety of fruit and grade.

MARKETS.

Glasgow is one of the three principal distributing centres in Great Britain for Canadian apples. The market days are Tuesdays and Fridays when buyers from all parts of the country come to attend the auction sales. Each broker has his own sale, there being no common sales room as at Liverpool. All the apples are carted up from the docks to the stores of the various brokers where they are assorted according to varieties, condition, &c. Samples are drawn from these and brought down to the broker's stand on morning of sale. One large firm has a private auction room where the fruit is handled similar to the Liverpool method. There are sometimes small shipments to Leith and Aberdeen, but the best results are obtained (so far as consignments are concerned) by shipping to one of the three centres, viz:—Liverpool, Glasgow or London.

PEARS

These should all be packed in half cases holding 20 lbs. net (similar to the Californian case), each pear being wrapped in paper. Last season we had several shipments of Bartlett pears, which unfortunately were not a success. Duchess, Comice, Bosc, Louise Bonne, Anjou and Keiffers arrived in good condition; but care must be taken to pack only the best specimens of each variety, as the smaller pears are, as a general rule, unsaleable.

Pears should always be carried in cold storage, although Duchess and Keiffers may sometimes carry well in ordinary storage if green and hard.

JOHN BROWN.

GLASGOW, 28th July, 1904.